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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

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Official reports give the number of motor vehicles in 1952 as four times the prewar figure. The total length of automobile roads is said to have doubled.

TUNNEL UNDER LETNA PLAIN IN PRAGUE -- Prague, Prace, 16 Jul 52

Construction is slowly nearing completion on the tunnel project through the Letna plain in Prague [a plateau on the west bank of the Vltava River]. The first traffic is scheduled to flow through the tunnel by 28 October 1953. The tunnel, intended to alleviate downtown traffic problems, runs from the end of the Jan Sverma bridge to ulice Nad Stolou, some 426 meters. The inside of the tunnel is 10.5 meters wide and 6.6 meters high and will be completely paved and tiled, as well as lighted and ventilated.

Some difficulty was encountered in building the tunnel directly under the 5,000-ton Agricultural Museum. Six reinforced-concrete supports, each 4 meters high, one meter wide, and 26 meters long, had to be placed under the museum, which stands on gravel and sand of the former river bed. This material constantly hampered operations by caving in and had to be shored up extensively.

It is estimated that some 4,000 automobiles per day will use the tunnel once it is open to traffic.

ODER-DANUBE CANAL PROJECT -- Berlin, Aussenhandels-Nachrichten, 9 Oct 52

The Czechoslovak government is vigorously expediting the planning work for the Oder-Danube Canal, because the rapid industrialization of the country, the ever-increasing traffic, and the rising need for water for industry, the cities, and agriculture in view of the limited water supply of the Czechoslovak Republic have shown the urgent necessity of this canal.

The canal will divert from the Danube River approximately 500 million cubic meters of water per year. Of this quantity, 50 million cubic meters are to be used for transportation purposes, and 150 million cubic meters to supply water to industry, the cities, and rural communities. The remaining 300 million cubic meters are to be used for irrigation, which will result in important increases in crop yield in large areas.

From the viewpoint of transportation, the canal is of the greatest importance, particularly for the Ostrava and Karvina, mining districts which need low-cost waterway transportation for moving iron ore and for bringing other raw materials into the area.

The Czechoslovak government has established the Oder-Danube Canal Construction Corporation, a body on which all public agencies and state enterprises interested in the canal construction are represented. The earlier plans had to be revised basically, and adjusted to the latest economic and technical developments. In the planning operations, particular use is made of Soviet experience in canal construction, especially with regard to the irrigation part of the project.

Budapest, Magyar Nemzet, 21 Dec 52

Preliminary work on the Oder-Danube Canal will begin in Czechoslovakia soon. The 307-kilometer canal will extend from Kozle (Poland) to Devinska Nova Ves (Czechoslovakia).

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The northern section of the canal will extend from Kozle to Lipnik (Czechoslovakia), while the southern section will consist of the stretch between Lipnik and Devinska Nova Ves. Three locks will be built in each section. The canal will be navigable for barges up to 1,000 tons.

It is expected that the canal will require 8 years to build. Excavators, similar to those used in the construction of the Lenin Canal /Volga-Don Canal imeni Lenin/, will be manufactured for this project. The USSR will send engineers and equipment to Czechoslovakia to promote the construction.

The canal will facilitate and reduce the cost of trade between the USSR and the People's Democracies. It will also be the source of an irrigation network which should turn the arid plains of Southern Moravia into rich farm lands.

WATER CONDITIONS ON LOWER DANUBE IMPROVE -- Budapest, Kozlekedesi Kozlony, 7 Sep 52

Water conditions on the Danube River improved somewhat due to the country-wide rains during the last 2 weeks. Navigation across the Iron Gate has, however, remained precarious.

While barge capacity can be utilized 100 percent inside Hungary, fully loaded vessels cannot pass the Iron Gate section and the shallows of the lower Danube River. Currently, barges passing through the Iron Gate may be loaded up to a draft of 140 centimeters only, a fact which reduces their total capacity by 60 percent.

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